

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-16 EA-11 EUR-25 NEA-14 RSC-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

PA-04 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 OMB-01 TAR-02 SWF-02

AGR-20 AID-20 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 OIC-04 SIL-01

STR-08 TRSE-00 CIEP-02 CEA-02 DOTE-00 FMC-04 CG-00

COA-02 DLOS-07 DRC-01 /258 W
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4026

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E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: ECOSOC, UN, ETRN

SUBJECT: 56TH ECOSOC ITEM 12 - CONTAINER STANDARDS FOR
INTERNATIONAL MULTIMODAL TRANSPORT

REFERENCE: (A) USUN 1677 (B) USUN 1679; (C) DATAFAX
FROM HINES MAY 8

1. DRAFT DECISION PROVIDED DEPT REF (A), AS AMENDED,
PASSED ECONOMIC COMMITTEE BY CONSENSUS MAY 8 P.M.
SESSION. DRAFT DECISION INTRODUCED BY BRAZILIAN DEL
WHO ORALLY PRESENTED AMENDMENTS, AS FOLLOWS: (A) PARA
2(I)(B), ADD AT END EXISTING PHRASE, "INCLUDING ASPECTS
CONCERNING INTERRELATED DIMENSIONS OF CONTAINERS";
(B) PARA 2(I)(D), REFERENCE NOW IS TO "DEVELOPED
COUNTRIES AND IN PARTICULAR THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES"
RATHER THAN ONLY TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES; (C) PARA 5,
REPLACE "ON THE SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT GIVEN BY
GOVERNMENTS TO" WITH "WITH A SUMMARY OF VIEWS OF GOVERN-
MENTS IN"; (D) PARA 6 (A), SAME AS (B) ABOVE. AMENDMENT
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(A) REFLECTS BRAZILIAN CONSULTATION WITH FRENCH;

OTHER AMENDMENTS REFLECT CONSULTATION WITH U.S.

2. US (KLEIN), FOLLOWING CONSENSUS DECISION MADE FOLLOWING STATEMENT. "THE UNITED STATES DELEGATION, SIR, WHILE NOT OBJECTING TO THE CONSENSUS DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE WITH RESPECT TO THE DRAFT DECISION ON ITEM 12 REGARDING CONTAINER STANDARDS FOR INTERNATIONAL INTERMODAL TRANSPORT, WOULD LIKE TO STATE, HOWEVER, ITS RESERVATIONS TO SOME OF THE PROVISIONS OF THIS DECISION. MY DELEGATION IS, OF COURSE, APPRECIATIVE OF THE RESULTS OF OUR CONSULTATIONS WITH OTHER DELEGATIONS ON THIS SUBJECT, BUT NEVERTHELESS FINDS THE END RESULT, INCLUDING THE SIZE OF THE AD HOC GROUP, ON THE WHOLE, DISAPPOINTING. IT IS THE VIEW OF MY DELEGATION, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT PLACING THE AD HOC GROUP UNDER THE AUSPICES OF UNCTAD WOULD BE DUPLICATIVE OF WORK BEING UNDERTAKEN ELSEWHERE IN THE UN SYSTEM; AND THUS THE ROLE GIVEN TO UNCTAD IN THIS DECISION RESULTS IN OUR JUDGMENT IN AN INEFFICIENT USE OF RESOURCES. ADDITIONALLY, IN THE DEBATE ON THIS SUBJECT MY DELEGATION ARGUED THAT THE MATTER OF CONTAINER STANDARDS WAS A HIGHLY TECHNICAL SUBJECT, AND THAT THERE WERE IN EXISTENCE CERTAIN ORGANIZATIONS WHICH POSSESSED THE NECESSARY EXPERTISE TO MAKE THE NEEDED TECHNICAL JUDGMENTS--IT WAS OUR THOUGHT THAT IMCO WAS SUCH AN ORGANIZATION; ANOTHER DELEGATION, I BELIEVE, MENTIONED THE UNITED NATIONS ITSELF. THAT IS TO SAY, THERE IS NO DEARTH OF TECHNICAL COMPETENCE AVAILABLE IF THIS COMMITTEE SERIOUSLY WANTED TO AVAIL ITSELF OF SUCH COMPETENCE.

3. "THE ARGUMENT HAS BEEN MADE THAT THE SUBJECT OF CONTAINER STANDARDS HAS ECONOMIC OVERTONES, AND ACCORDINGLY THAT UNCTAD IS THE PROPER BODY FOR THE KINDS OF CONSIDERATIONS EXPECTED TO BE MADE BY THE AD HOC GROUP. MY DELEGATION DOES NOT QUARREL WITH THE VIEW THAT THE SUBJECT OF CONTAINER STANDARDS HAS ECONOMIC OVERTONES. HOWEVER, MY DELEGATION WOULD POINT OUT THAT THE TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF CONTAINERIZATION ARE SEPARABLE AND IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD BE TREATED AS SUCH. THE REVIEW OF THE WORK OF THE ISO IS SUCH AX
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CIRCUMSTANCE. UNDER THE PRESENT FORMULATION, UNCTAD'S PARAMOUNT ROLE PUTS THE TECHNICAL QUESTIONS SUBORDINATE TO THE ECONOMIC ONES, WHEREAS IT IS THE VIEW OF MY DELEGATION THAT IN THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCE THIS SHOULD BE THE OTHER WAY AROUND. THUS, WE WOULD LIKED TO HAVE SEEN UNCTAD CAST IN AN ADVISORY ROLE TO THE TECHNICIANS; AS THE DECISION NOW STANDS, THE TECHNICIANS ARE IN AN ADVISORY ROLE TO THE ECONOMISTS--AND AT THE RISK, SIR,

OF OVERSIMPLIFICATION AND WITH ALL DUE RESPECT TO THE ECONOMISTS, THIS IT SEEMS TO MY DELEGATION, IS THE ROAD TO THE LEAST PRACTICAL RESULTS IN THE LONGEST PERIOD FOR THE PROBLEM AT HAND. INDEED, THE RECOGNITION OF SEPARATE ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL QUESTIONS IN THE FIELD OF INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORTATION IS ALREADY RECOGNIZED BY UNCTAD. THUS, AN INTERNATIONAL INTERMODAL TRANSPORTATION EFFORT IS ALREADY BEING UNDERTAKEN IN THIS BODY--THIS IS AN ECONOMIC QUESTION IN LARGE PART; WHY COULD NOT THE ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF CONTAINERIZATION BE SUBSUMED UNDER THIS EFFORT? WHY SHOULD THEY BE MIXED UP WITH TECHNICAL ISSUES?

4. "MY DELEGATION WOULD HOPE, SIR, THAT IN ARRANGING FOR THE AD HOC INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP THAT APPROPRIATE CONSIDERATION WOULD BE GIVEN TO TECHNICAL QUALIFICATIONS. THUS, WE WOULD HOPE THAT (A) REPRESENTATION WOULD REFLECT THE EXPERIENCE OF THOSE NATIONS ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN AND BENEFITING FROM CONTAINER SERVICE, AND (B) THE GOVERNMENTS DESIGNATED AS AD HOC INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEMBERS INSURE THAT THEIR REPRESENTATIVES HAVE THE NECESSARY BACKGROUND AND TECHNICAL EXPERTISE TO REVIEW AND JUDGE THE WORK OF THE ISO. IF, SIR, THE MEMBER NATIONS AND THEIR REPRESENTATIVES ARE NOT CONVERSANT WITH THE HIGHLY TECHNICAL WORK OF ISO THEN, SIR, IT SEEMS HIGHLY LIKELY THAT MY EARLIER ASSESSMENT WILL MATERIALIZE--NAMELY, THAT THE GROUP WILL GET THE LEAST WORK DONE IN THE LONGEST PERIOD OF TIME.

5. "I WOULD REQUEST, SIR, THAT THE UNITED STATES RESERVATIONS AND THE REASONS FOR THEM BE MADE PART OF THE RECORD OF THE COMMITTEE AND THE COUNCIL."

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6. U.S. DEL ONLY DEL EXPRESSING RESERVATIONS.
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